

Adopted: May 17, 1944

File No. 3856-43

REPORT OF THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD  
on the  
Investigation of an Accident Involving Aircraft  
During a Local Pleasure Flight

John Henry Culp and Edgar Earl Kirkpatrick were fatally injured in an accident which occurred approximately  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles southeast of Stamford, Texas, about 3:52 p.m. on September 12, 1943. Culp, age 16, held a student pilot certificate and had flown approximately 16 hours, 4 of which were solo. Kirkpatrick, age 18, also held a student pilot certificate. He had received a few hours of dual instruction and had not soloed. The aircraft, a Porterfield CP-50, NC 25413, owned by Thomas Vernon Lovvorn, Elmer Wedeking and V. J. Walski, was destroyed by impact and fire.

Culp took off from the Stamford Municipal Airport about 2:30 p.m., and by previous arrangement landed on an auxiliary field, approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles away, where he picked up Kirkpatrick. Shortly thereafter they were seen flying low over a nearby lake and the Stamford golf course. The plane was next observed landing on a farm 4 miles east of Stamford. Apparently Culp became apprehensive about the mushy condition of the farm field, as he had Kirkpatrick deplane to lighten the load. He then made a take-off and landed in a nearby field where Kirkpatrick again boarded the plane. They took off, climbed to a safe altitude and proceeded to put on a show for some of their high school friends by executing a loop and a spin. One witness stated that Culp then circled his home at an altitude lower than the housetop, zoomed the house and dropped a paper sack of flour on the roof. Following this the pilot dived at a truck in a driveway and in so doing struck and severed power line wires leading from the highway to the house. The plane veered to the left, collided with wires crossing the highway, and crashed on the left wing and nose. It caught fire immediately.

Investigation disclosed no evidence of failure of any part of the aircraft prior to the accident. Dual controls were installed and operative. Parachutes were not worn by the occupants.

The probable cause of this accident was action of the pilot in flying recklessly at dangerously low altitudes without regard for the safety of himself or others.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs  
Secretary